

litical scientists Moncrief, of Boise State University, and Niemi and Powell, both of the University of Rochester.

Starting in 1990, with Colorado, California, and Oklahoma, critics of the status quo in state government managed to impose term limits in 21 states. Legislators were restricted to terms of between six and 12 continuous years in one chamber. In three states, courts overturned the limits; in two, legislatures repealed them; in five, the laws haven't been in effect long enough to have had a significant impact. That leaves 11 term-limited states driving the trend.

While the long decline in legislative turnover continued into the 1990s in states without term limits, the turnover rate rose in the handful of term-limited states. Nearly 31 percent of lower-house legislators in those states were newcomers during the 1990s, compared with 25 percent during the 1980s.

In the upper houses, turnover increased from 21 percent to 26 percent.

As Moncrief, Niemi, and Powell note, the rise in turnover rates wasn't as predictable as it seems. Term limit laws might, for example, have discouraged individuals from challenging incumbents, and thereby actually *decreased* turnover.

Political scientists were right to predict that term limits would encourage more lower-house members to seek election to their state's upper chamber. In states with term limits of six to eight years, about a quarter of the senators in 2002 were graduates of the lower house, compared with 10 percent in 1994.

Still to be answered, the authors note, is the key question about term limits: Does the frequent infusion of new blood improve the performance of legislatures more than the continual loss of legislative experience hurts it?

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

The Psychology of Homeland Defense

"The Neglected Home Front" by Stephen E. Flynn, in *Foreign Affairs* (Sept.–Oct. 2004), 58 E. 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021; "Leap Before You Look: The Failure of Homeland Security" by Benjamin Friedman, in *Breakthroughs* (Spring 2004), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Security Studies Program, 292 Main St. (E38-600), Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

There's an unusual element in the growing debate over homeland security. In addition to arguments over policy, politics, and dollars, the debate now includes serious disagreements over how to adjust the national psyche to the threat of terrorism.

One view is advanced by Flynn, a senior fellow in national security studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, who charges that the Bush administration is wrongly preoccupied with striking terrorist havens abroad while spending too little on homeland security and neglecting the "systematic engagement of civil society and the private sector" in the effort.

The terrorists' real target, Flynn argues, is not any particular locale but public confidence in the "vital systems" that underpin American society. But U.S. "transportation, energy, information, financial, chemical, food, and logistical networks" remain, for the most part, virtually unprotected. While the Pentagon will spend \$7.6 billion to improve security at military bases this year, the Department of Homeland Security

will spend only \$2.6 billion to protect America's vast economic infrastructure.

A sound defense requires something like what's been done with air safety. Why does the public continue to fly even after horrifying airline crashes? Because people are confident that government and industry will do their utmost to incorporate lessons learned and guarantee future safety, according to Flynn. Americans must feel the same confidence in the wake of any terrorist attack.

That means abandoning the Bush administration's reliance on the private sector to improve security at chemical plants and other potential targets. Corporations are unlikely to act unless the government requires their competitors to make similar investments. Likewise, says Flynn, the population must be mobilized. But after "a rocky start that generated a run on plastic sheeting and duct tape," civil defense efforts have fizzled.

A diametrically opposed view comes from Friedman, a graduate student at the Massa-

chusetts Institute of Technology: “Two dangerous fantasies afflict American homeland security: the idea that we are all at great risk and the idea that all preparation for risk helps to avert it.” With its national color-coded alert system, its warnings that all Americans should “make a plan for what you will do in an emergency, [and] make a kit of emergency supplies,” and its official declaration that even native Alaskan villages and other obscure sites are potential terrorist targets, the Department of Homeland Security is only whipping up irrational fears—and playing right into terrorists’ hands. If they assessed threats rationally, Friedman says, Americans would worry a lot more about their diets and a lot less about suicide bombers.

The irrationality of the current approach is reflected in the government’s \$50 billion homeland security budget, which has provided \$58,000 for the town of Colchester, Vermont, to buy “a search and rescue vehicle that can bore through the concrete of collapsed buildings,” and a formula for “first responder” aid that gives Wyoming \$35 per resident while New York gets \$5.

We’re spending too much on homeland security, Friedman believes, and not enough on the things that would do the most good—hunting down terrorists and curtailing the supply of weapons they would turn against the United States. “If we are all afraid of terrorism,” he declares, “we are all its victims.”

Military Myths

“A School for the Nation?” by Ronald R. Krebs, in *International Security* (Spring 2004), Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Univ., 79 John F. Kennedy St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

The idea that the armed forces can serve as a “school for the nation” was born in 19th-century Europe and has since been embraced everywhere from tsarist Russia to the contemporary developing world. In the United States, a small group of intellectuals on both the left

and the right tout a revived draft or mandatory national service as a way to forge a stronger sense of national community and overcome the divisions of race, class, and culture.

It may work in those old World War II movies, in which groups of wisecracking guys



Building better citizens? World War II-era recruits are sworn into service.